

USU's ESEA Reauthorization Recommendations

Coalition
of
Urban
Serving
Universities
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About the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities

The coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU) is a national network of public, urban-based research universities that provides a national voice within public higher education to articulate and promote an urban agenda.

USU advocates federal policies that support public urban research universities and create partnerships with them to fuel the development of the nation's cities and metro regions.

USU collects and analyzes data across a network of public urban research institutions to create a reliable, factual foundation for the universities' work in cities.

USU provides the leadership of public urban research universities with a common agenda and the tools to improve urban health, strengthen urban economies, and develop a capable workforce for the 21st century.

Through its initiatives: 1) creating a competitive workforce, 2) building strong communities, and 3) improving the health of a diverse population, USU is identifying and expanding innovative models of university-community partnerships across U.S. cities.

USU's ESEA Guiding Principles

Urban school districts face many educational challenges unique to cities. Their student bodies are more likely to consist of a higher percentage of minorities and come from low-income families and non-English speaking homes than students from other school districts. Graduation rates and student performance on state exams for urban schools typically fall below state and national averages. In addition, these districts experience larger average school enrollments. All these factors greatly impact the ability of urban districts to recruit, train, and retrain highly qualified teachers, particularly in high-need subjects such as mathematics and science.

Urban serving institutions possess a broad range of skills and resources – intellectual, human, technological, and social – to play a pivotal role in pre-service and in-service activities specifically designed for urban educators and schools.

To ensure urban serving universities utilize these skills and resources, ESEA must support partnerships and initiatives between urban serving universities and state and local education agencies, particularly in the areas of urban teacher initiatives, longitudinal data systems, and cradle to career initiatives.



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Improving Outcomes for ALL Children

USU recommends Congress authorize, in Title I of ESEA (Education of the Disadvantaged), the Race to the Top Program to enable states to create a pipeline that begins early and lasts a lifetime by promoting a stronger alignment of elementary and secondary education with the skills needed to succeed in college and the workforce. The inclusion of Race to the Top in ESEA would also improve state and local capacity to collect and use data to measure student growth, and inform teachers and school leaders how to improve instruction to ensure students succeed and compete in the global economy.



USU recommends Congress amend Title IV of ESEA, 21st Century Schools, to include language that increases the capacity of states, school districts, and schools to create safe, healthy, and drug-free school environments so that students may focus on their education by promoting partnerships between local school districts and institutions of higher education which have a profound impact on and understand the needs of their communities and how to address these needs.

USU recommends Congress include in Title V of ESEA (Parental Choice and Innovative Programs), the authorization of Promise Neighborhoods to support development and implementation grants to eligible institutions of higher education including public research universities, non-profit organizations, and Indian tribes for neighborhood projects aimed at combating the effects of poverty and improving education and life outcomes, from birth through college to career, for children and youth in high-need areas.

RATIONALE

Urban school districts face many educational challenges unique to cities. Their student bodies are more likely to consist of a higher percentage of minorities and come from low-income families and non-English speaking homes than students from other school districts. The graduation rates and student performance on state exams for urban schools typically fall below state and national averages. In addition, these districts experience larger average school enrollments.

As key stakeholders in the urban education system, universities can play a catalytic role in improving urban education systems. This has been demonstrated by a number of urban research universities, a category that includes all members of the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities.

At the University of Akron, for example, Akron public schools have cosponsored the creation of a high school on the university campus where potential first-generation college students can get a head start. The University of Minnesota has created the “Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC)” to weave together research and public engagement for the purpose of developing long-term partnerships aimed at, amongst other goals, developing human talent, including early childhood education and schools readiness, professional development for youth workers, college readiness, and out-of-school programs.

In 2006, the University of Cincinnati launched a first-of-its-kind educational partnership called “Strive.” The partnership connects the education, business, nonprofit, civic, and philanthropic and community sectors in efforts to help every child achieve educational success from cradle to career.

The success of Strive has encouraged other cities to develop similar partnerships adapted to meet the needs of the communities they serve. The program has been expanded, with the support of Living Cities and the USU Coalition, to additional cities and their university partners: California State University – East Bay, the University of Houston, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Virginia Commonwealth University, Portland State University, Arizona State University, California State – Fresno, The University of Memphis, the University of New Mexico, and the City University of New York.

USU believes that the reauthorization of ESEA provides an opportunity to model Strive by supporting an education pipeline that begins early and lasts a lifetime specifically, by authorizing Promise Neighborhoods and Race to the Top, as well as taking measures to improve student safety, health, and well-being to keep them on track to succeeding in college and the workplace.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE

Race to the Top

Amend Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged to include the authorization of the Race to the Top Program

Subpart __ - Race to the Top

Sec. __. Purpose.

It is the purpose of this subpart to award competitive grants to states or coalitions of partnerships between local educational agencies and institutions of higher education to encourage and reward partnerships that are –

- (1) Creating the conditions for education innovation and reform;
- (2) Implementing ambitious plans in four education reform areas including success in college and the workplace, improving state and local capacity to collect and use data to measure student growth and inform teachers and school leaders how to improve instruction, and ensuring student global competitiveness; and
- (3) Achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, improving high school graduation rates, and ensuring student preparation for success in college and careers.

Sec. __. Grants.

- (a) AUTHORIZATION – From funds made available under sec. __ to carry out this subpart, the Secretary shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to enable the entities to implement this grant program in accordance with this subpart.

Sec. __. Use of Funds.

- (a) REQUIRED USES OF FUNDS – An eligible entity that receives a grant under this subpart shall use the grant funds to-
 - (1) Take a comprehensive Approach to the Four Education Reform Areas listed above;
 - (2) Place an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

- (3) Expand and Adapt of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems
- (4) For P-20 Coordination and Vertical Alignment

Sec. __. Applications.

- (a) SUBMISSION – An eligible entity that desires a grant under this subpart shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information and the Secretary may require
- (b) CONTENTS – An application submitted under subsection (a) shall include –
 - (1) A description of the progress it has made to date in each of the four education reform areas listed above;
 - (2) A description of a State’s statewide support from stakeholders and LEAs or a description of a State’s statewide support plans for coalitions of partnerships between local educational agencies and institutions of higher education;
 - (3) A description of how the state will use grant funds and other resources to meet targets and perform related functions, including how it will use funds awarded under this program to achieve its targets for improving student achievement and graduation rates and for closing achievement gaps and giving priority to high-need LEAs;
 - (4) A description of how the state will use grant funds that includes, but is not limited to--
 - (A) The key activities to be undertaken;
 - (B) The goals and rationale for the activities, which may include but need not be limited to evidence of the past effectiveness of those activities, as documented in research or through the effective implementation of an activity in one or more States, LEAs, or schools;
 - (C) The timeline for implementing the activities;
 - (D) The party or parties responsible for implementing the activities;
 - (E) The resources the State will use to support the activities (e.g., funding, personnel, systems);
 - (F) The State's or coalitions of LEA-IHE partnerships’ annual targets, where applicable, with respect to the performance measures aligned to the Criterion for the four school years beginning with the 2010-2011 school year. The Appendix to this notice contains a table listing the proposed performance measures. Where plans are proposed for reform efforts not covered by a performance measure specified by the Department, States are encouraged to propose performance measures and annual targets for those efforts; and
 - (1) Certification from the State Attorney General, or other chief State legal officer, that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions concerning, State law (for example, with respect to the Eligibility Requirement regarding teacher effectiveness or any of the applicable Selection Criteria) in its application are complete, accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law; and
 - (2) Such other information as the Secretary may require.

Amend Title IV – 21st Century Schools

Sec. 4114 (c)(1): (Consultation) – Related to those entities local educational agencies may consult with in developing its application, add ‘*representatives of institutions of higher education, as appropriate.*’

Promise Neighborhoods

Amend Title V – Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs to include an authorization of the Promise Neighborhoods Program

Subpart ___ - Promise Neighborhoods

Sec. __. Purpose.

It is the purpose of this subpart to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth in our most distressed communities and to transform these communities by –

- (1) Identifying and increasing the capacity of eligible organizations that are focused on achieving results for children and youth throughout an entire neighborhood;
- (2) Building a complete continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions of both educational programs and family and community supports with great schools at the center;
- (3) Integrating programs and breaking down agency “silos” so that solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies;
- (4) Developing the local infrastructure of systems and resources needed to sustain and scale up proven, effective solutions across the broader region beyond the initial neighborhood; and
- (5) Learning about the overall impact of the Promise Neighborhoods program and about the relationship between particular strategies in Promise Neighborhoods and student outcomes including through rigorous research on successful practices and evaluation of the program.

Sec. __. Grants.

- (b) AUTHORIZATION – From funds made available under sec. ___ to carry out this subpart, the Secretary shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to enable the entities to plan or implement a Promise Neighborhood in accordance with this subpart.

Sec. __. Use of Funds.

- (b) REQUIRED USES OF FUNDS – An eligible entity that receives a grant under this subpart shall use the grant funds -

(1.) During a planning year –

- (A.) Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and segmentation analysis of children and youth in the neighborhood;
- (B.) Develop a plan to deliver a continuum of solutions with the potential to drive results, including building community support for and involvement in the development of the plan;
- (C.) Establish effective partnerships both to provide solutions along the continuum and to commit resources to sustain and scale up what works;
- (D.) Plan, build, adapt, or expand a longitudinal data system that will provide information that the grantee will use for learning, continuous improvement, and accountability; and
- (E.) Participate in a community of practice
- (F.) Engage institutions of higher education in research and recommendations for best practices

(2.) During an implementation year –

- (A) Implement a continuum of solutions that addresses neighborhood challenges, as identified in a needs assessment and segmentation analysis and that will improve results for children and youth in the neighborhood;

- (B) Continue to build and strengthen partnerships that will provide solutions along the continuum of solutions and that will commit resources to sustain and scale up what works;
- (C) Collect data on indicators at least annually, and use and improve a data system for learning, continuous improvement, and accountability;
- (D) Demonstrate progress on goals for improving systems, such as by making changes in policies and organizations, and by leveraging resources to sustain and scale up what works; and
- (E) Participate in a community of practice.
- (F) Engage in research on effective strategies and evaluation of program outcomes.

Sec. __. Applications.

- (c) SUBMISSION – An eligible entity that desires a grant under this subpart shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information and the Secretary may require
- (d) CONTENTS – An application submitted under subsection (a) shall include –
 - (1) A description of geographically defined areas to be served and the level of distress in that area based on indicators of need and other relevant indicators
 - (2) A description of how it will plan to build a continuum of solutions based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence designed to significantly improve educational outcomes and to support the healthy development and well-being of children and youth in the neighborhood.
 - (3) A description of how they will identify federal, state, or local policies, regulations, or other requirements that would impede the applicant in achieving its goals
 - (4) If the program it to be carried out by a partnership, the name of each partner and a description of the partner’s responsibilities;
 - (5) A description of procedures and identified university partners for research on identification of best practices and procedures for evaluation of implementation of selected program strategies; and
 - (6) Such other information as the Secretary may require

Sec. __. Priorities.

In awarding planning grants under this subpart, the Secretary shall give priority to an eligible entity-

- (1) That conducts a comprehensive needs assessment and segmentation analysis of children and youth in the neighborhood;
- (2) That develops a plan to deliver a continuum of solutions with the potential to drive results;
- (3) That establishes effective partnerships to provide solutions along the continuum and to commit resources to sustain and scale up what works;
- (4) That plans, builds, adapts, or expands a longitudinal data system that will provide information that the grantee will use for learning, continuous improvement, and accountability; and
- (5) Participates in a community of practice

In awarding implementation grants under this subpart, the Secretary shall give priority to an eligible entity –

- (1) That Implements a continuum of solutions that addresses neighborhood challenges
- (2) That challenges, as identified in a needs assessment and segmentation analysis, and that will improve results for children and youth in the neighborhood.

- (3) That continues to build and strengthen partnerships that will provide solutions along the continuum of solutions and that will commit resources to sustain and scale up what works.
- (4) That collects data on indicators at least annually, and use and improve a data system for learning, continuous improvement, and accountability.
- (5) That demonstrates progress on goals for improving systems, such as by making changes in policies and organizations, and by leveraging resources to sustain and scale up what works.
- (6) That participates in a community of practice.
- (7) That demonstrates effective use of research in strategy identification, assistance with long-range data collection and analysis; and conducts appropriate evaluation of initiatives.

Sec. __. Definitions.

In this subpart:

- (1) Community of practice means a group of grantees that agrees to interact regularly to solve a persistent problem or improve practice in an area that is important to them and the success of their project.
- (2) Continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions or continuum of solutions means solutions that—
 - A. Include programs, policies, practices, services, systems, and supports that result in improving educational and developmental outcomes for children from cradle through college to career;
 - B. Are based on the best available evidence, including, where available, strong or moderate evidence;
 - C. Are linked and integrated seamlessly; and
 - D. Include both education programs and family and community supports.
- (3) Education programs means programs that include, but are not limited to—
 - A. High-quality early learning programs or services designed to improve outcomes across multiple domains of early learning for young children.
 - B. For children in preschool through the 12th grade, programs, policies, and personnel that are linked to improved educational outcomes, including effective teachers and effective principals and strategies, practices, or programs that encourage and facilitate the evaluation, analysis, and use of student achievement, student growth and other data by educators, families, and other stakeholders to inform decision-making;
 - C. Must include college- and career-ready standards, assessments, and practices, including a well-rounded curriculum, instructional practices, strategies, or programs in, at a minimum, core academic subjects as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA, that are aligned with high academic content and achievement standards and with high-quality assessments based on those standards
 - D. Programs that prepare students for college and career success
- (4) Effective school means a school that has—
 - A. Significantly closed the achievement gaps between subgroups of students (as identified in section 1111(b)(3)(C)(xiii) of the ESEA) within the school or district; or
 - B. Demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement in the school for all subgroups of students (as identified in section 1111(b)(3)(C)(xiii) of the ESEA) in the school; and made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or recruitment and placement of effective teachers and effective principals.
- (5) Eligible entity means an organization that—
 - A. Is representative of the geographic area proposed to be served

- B. A nonprofit organization that meets the definition of a nonprofit under 34 CFR 77.1(c), which may include a faith-based nonprofit organization.
- C. An institution of higher education as defined by section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.
- D. An Indian tribe;
- E. Currently provides at least one of the solutions from the applicant's proposed continuum of solutions in the geographic area proposed to be served; and
- F. Operates or proposes to work with and involve in carrying out its proposed project, in coordination with the school's LEA, at least one public elementary or secondary school that is located within the identified geographic area that the grant will serve.

Sec. __. Authorization of Appropriations.

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subpart \$150,000,000 for fiscal year 2012 and each of the 5 succeeding fiscal years.

Supporting a Well-Prepared Successful Urban Education Workforce

USU recommends Congress incorporate measures into Title II of ESEA to support the creation of, and strengthen existing partnerships between school districts and institutions of higher education to successfully train and place effective educators and school leaders in our nation's schools and classrooms as well as identify and disseminate strategies to improve teacher effectiveness in high-need districts.



USU recommends Congress develop measures within Title II of ESEA to assist states, districts, and schools in their efforts to improve instruction and raise student achievement in high-need academic areas, including prioritizing funding for eligible entities, including institutions of higher education, to support efforts to improve outcomes in these areas.

RATIONALE

The unique challenges urban school districts face greatly impact the ability of urban districts to recruit, train, and retrain highly qualified teachers, particularly in high-need subjects such as science and mathematics.

A number of USU member schools, such as the University of Missouri-Kansas City and California State University, San Bernardino have established programs to improve the quality of urban education by addressing the issues of teacher preparation and teacher quality. USU believes it is critical to put effective teachers and leaders in every school to ensure all students are college-and career-ready.

For these reasons, ESEA reauthorization must include provisions that improve teacher preparation and student outcomes, particularly in high-need schools and subjects and institutions of higher education and their resources should be utilized as a resource in this endeavor.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE

Amend Title II – Preparing, Training and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals – Part A, Subpart 3, Subgrants to Eligible Partnerships, by adding a new subparagraph under Sec. 2134, Use of Funds

Sec. 2134 (a) – (1) identify and disseminate strategies to improve teacher effectiveness in high-need local educational agencies including (A) identifying promising practices in the effective teaching and learning of students in high-need local educational agencies (C) identify promising training and professional development techniques designed to prepare, assist, and retain teachers placed in high-need schools; and (D) ascertain areas in which existing data about promising practices is insufficient.

Amend Title II – Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals – Part A, Subgrants to Eligible Partnerships, by adding a new subparagraph under Sec. 2134, Use of Funds

Sec. 2134 (a)(2)(__) – *shall include activities of partnerships between one or more local educational agencies, one or more schools served by such local educational agencies, and one or more institutions of higher education for the purpose of improving teaching and learning in high-need local educational agencies*

Amend Title II – Preparing, Training and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals – Part A, Subpart 3, Subgrants to Eligible Partnerships, by adding a new subparagraph under Sec. 2134, Use of Funds

Sec. 2134 (a)(__) – *professional development activities in high-need academic subjects, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics*

Maintain Funding to Execute the Goals and Provisions of ESEA

USU recommends that Congress maintain current funding for cradle to career initiatives, which are critical in creating the necessary pipeline to improve education from early childhood through career and meet the President’s 2012 Budget Request of \$150 million for the Promise Neighborhood Program.

USU recommends that Congress provides continued funding opportunities within ESEA for urban teachers.



RATIONALE

No Child Left Behind was passed a decade ago to improve student achievement and change the culture of America’s schools. While some progress has been made, much work remains to ensure all of our nation’s students are prepared to enter college and the workforce, particularly in our nation’s urban areas which face many unique educational challenges including lower graduation rates and test scores.

The federal government must make investments to address these challenges. This includes investing in urban universities to enable them to coordinate, evaluate, and disseminate solutions to urban problems related to education.

Members of the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities

